

## REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following remarks and amendments. Claim 35, 36 and 38-41 are pending in the application.

### I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 35, 36 and 38-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 7,127,117 issued to Sano et al. (hereinafter “Sano”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,388,682 issued to Ihara (hereinafter “Ihara”) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,706 filed by Weitbruch et al. (hereinafter “Weitbruch”). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claim 35 is as follows:

35. An image processing apparatus comprising:  
a compression unit to generate encoded data by dividing an input image into a plurality of divided regions and perform a compression process for each of the divided regions;  
a first setting unit to set one or a plurality of aspect ratios and one or a plurality of sizes corresponding to a display unit of an external device;  
a second setting unit to set a plurality of image regions within the input image, one of the plurality of image regions set by said second setting unit having at least one aspect ratio and at least one size set by the first setting unit, and to set boundaries of the divided regions subject to the compression process of the compression unit so as to match boundaries of the image regions;  
a storage to store the encoded data generated by the compression unit; and  
an expansion unit to expand the encoded data stored in the storage. (emphasis added)

As set forth above, Claim 35 includes a second setting unit to set image regions within the input image, where one of the image regions set by the second setting unit has at least one aspect ratio and at least one size set by a first setting unit, and where the second setting unit sets boundaries of divided regions subject to the compression process of a compression unit in order to match boundaries of the image regions. These features and/or operations are also in the other independent claims. Applicant respectfully submits that these features are not in Sano, Ihara, and Weitbruch.

Sano proposes dividing the original image into a plurality of tiles that are compressed and encoded. The quantization rate in the vicinity of the boundary between each tile and its adjacent

tile is set lower than the quantization rate at other parts. Sano also proposes dividing the original image into a plurality of tiles, making a bit-plane division, and ordering the bit-planes according to the encoding sequence. The bit-plane in the vicinity of the tile boundary region (where the quantization rate is set low) is shifted with respect to the region that is distant from the tile boundary and that has the high quantization rate, so as to be included in the higher layer of the layers formed by the ordered bit-planes.

The Examiner admits that Sano does not teach the first and second setting units set forth in Claim 35. However, the Examiner believes that Ihara discloses setting one or a plurality of aspect ratios and/or one or a plurality of sizes corresponding to a display unit, and that Weithbruch discloses the first and second setting units.

Weithbruch proposes an automatic aspect detection in digital video pictures. The Examiner cites column 5, lines 31-39 and Fig. 7. This merely describes a process of detecting the existence of a horizontal border (or frontier) between a black bar portion and an active portion on the screen. Hence, after digitizing the picture, a determination is made for each line to determine whether the line is the active portion (numerical value “1”) or the back bar portion (numerical value “0”). Although not clear, Applicants assume the Examiner is considering the process of detecting the existence of the horizontal border in Weithbruch as corresponding to “match boundaries of the image regions” as is recited in independent claim 35, for example.

However, as set forth above, independent claim 35 recites “a second setting unit to set a plurality of image regions within the input image, one of the plurality of image regions set by said second setting unit having at least one aspect ration and at least one size set by the first setting unit, and to set boundaries of the divided regions subject to the compression process of the compression unit so as to match boundaries of the image regions”.

Weithbruch does not disclose or suggest a compression process. Further, Weithbruch does not disclose or suggest, among other things, “to set boundaries of the divided regions subject to the compression process of the compression unit so as to match boundaries of the image regions”, as is recited in independent claim 35. Sano and Ihara also do not disclose such a feature.

Substantially similar arguments can also be made with respect to the other independent claims 38 and 39.

Furthermore, according to the image processing apparatus recited in claim 35, it is possible to obtain an advantageous effect in that the image can be reproduced by maintaining the aspect ratio and the size of the input image as they are and decoding only the codes of the portions according to the aspect ration and the size of the display unit of the external device. In other words, among other things, one characterizing feature of the present invention relates to how the boundaries of the divided regions are set when performing the compression process (or encoding process).

Sano et al, Ihara and Harada et al also fail to disclose or suggest, among other things, the above described features and the advantageous effect of the present invention.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention as claimed is not obvious in view of Sano, Ihara, and Weitbruch.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (408) 720 8300.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: March 23, 2009



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